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OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
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Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Attorney General McGraw Shuts Down Another Canadian Advance Fee Loan Scam Website

Attorney General Darrell McGraw today announced another small victory in the battle against cross-border advance fee loan scams. The website, www.greatwideinvestings.com, has been shut down by McGraw's Consumer Protection Division after complaints arrived from consumers across the country.

The advance fee loan scam, Great Wide Investings (GreatWide), was using a West Virginia address. Consumers could logon to the website and apply for a loan. The loan would reportedly be from a private lender and those with bad credit could qualify. In order to receive the loan the victim would have to wire transfer anywhere from \$1,000 to \$4,500 to the so-called private lender. The money was alleged to be for insurance and other fees associated with the loan.

GreatWide listed its address as East Ridge Road in Charleston, West Virginia. McGraw's office was contacted by the person who lives at the address after she started receiving mail from California from a victim of the scam.

In addition to ripping off residents in the United States through its wire transfer scam, GreatWide was also obtaining information from consumers that it could use for identity theft.

"Any person who has applied for a loan on any website that turns out to be fraudulent is a possible victim of identity theft," McGraw said. "Consumers should beware of any website asking for name, address, date of birth, and social security number. You should be certain that you are dealing with a reputable company before supplying any personal information on-line."

Attorney General McGraw advises those who supplied information to GreatWide or operations similar to GreatWide to find out about the Security Freeze laws available in their state. West Virginia residents can place a security freeze on their credit reports in order to prevent an unauthorized user from obtaining credit in their name. Consumer can learn more about placing a security freeze on their credit reports by visiting McGraw's website at www.wvago.gov.

The Consumer Protection division is currently working with Canadian Officials in an attempt to turn off GreatWide's toll-free telephone number, 1-800-518-2823.

"Our objective here was to shut down GreatWide's website and to disconnect its 800 number to prevent the company from ripping off more consumers. These fraudulent operations are going to learn that officials in West Virginia will not sit idle and allow them to perpetrate fraud and claim to be from our state." McGraw concluded.

If you or someone you know has been a victim of an advance fee loan scam or need assistance with another consumer

protection matter, contact Attorney General Darrell McGraw's Consumer Protection Division at 1-800-368-8808 or on the web at www.wvago.gov.

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